

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Clark Fork Basin Water Management Task Force

FROM: Matthew McKinney, Executive Director
Gerald Mueller, Project Coordinator
Mark Lambert, Project Associate

SUBJECT: Summary of May 5, 2003 Meeting

DATE: November 22, 2005

Participants

The following members of the Task Force were present:

Task Force Members:

Harvey Hackett	Bitterroot Water Forum
Fred Lurie	Blackfoot Challenge
Bill Slack	Lower Flathead (St. Ignatius)
Elna Darrow	Flathead Basin Commission
Phil Tourangeau	Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Marc Spratt	Flathead Conservation District
Gail Patton	Sanders County
Matt Clifford	Clark Fork Coalition
Jim Dinsmore	Upper Clark Fork Basin Steering Committee
Eugene Manley	Granite County
Verdell Jackson	Legislature

Staff:

Gerald Mueller	Montana Consensus Council (MCC)
Matt McKinney	MCC
Mark Lambert	MCC
Maureen Hartmann	MCC
Mike McLane	Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)

Meeting Goals

1. Review & confirm options for water conservation
2. Review preliminary draft of orderly development of water
3. Learn about water quality standards & USFS water quality monitoring
4. Discuss Task Force schedule and public involvement activity
5. Process evaluation

Discussion: Review of “Options for Conserving Water”

- New categories for the “Options” paper were established:
 1. Administration
 2. Educational
 3. Management

- When considering conservation targets, we need to understand:
 1. The amount of instream flow needed by the fishery
 2. Basin hydrology
- Incentives for agriculture not to convert from flood to sprinkler irrigation
- Efficiency should be defined - distribute copies of the chapter of the state water plan on agriculture water use efficiency
- Ideas for conservation of water by non-ag users is needed
- Municipal users may contract with ag users to effect the ag users water use such as type of irrigation
- A mechanism to arbitrate water uses is needed
- Conservancy districts may be able to perform arbitration function
- Municipalities may finance water storage to maintain dilution for their sewage treatment plants
- NCAT soil moisture probes may improve irrigation efficiency measured in terms of crop growth but may not reduce the amount of water use
- Change the terminology “water use” to “water consumption”
- Local water use groups must be organized and involved
- Issue: When considering water salvage, does a water right specify the amount of water that may be diverted or consumed? Salvage law causes lower return flows, because more water is used. Amount of water diverted does not change. The use of salvage water may be increasing water use consumption (by diminishing return flow).
- Efficient use of water may be counterproductive in certain cases; sprinkler conversion can be detrimental, also beneficial
- Increasing DNRC capacity to manage water data: Task Force should play a role in informing legislature that this is an issue that needs to be addressed in the future.
- Municipal sewage plants need dilution capability . . . may finance storage.

Refer to the “Agricultural Water Use Efficiency” report for help on the issue of efficient use of water. Mike will get copies of this to Task Force.

Various theses have been written on the potential use of water conservancy districts in Montana. Task Force may be interested in seeing these reports.

Presentation: USFS Water Quality Monitoring, Steve Wegner, USFS Hydrologist, Libby, Montana

- Task Force should try to use peer-reviewed work in the development of the management plan so that the plan has more legitimacy and is defensible in court
- Use USGS as a resource for basin statistics
- Money must be allocated for the specific purpose of monitoring of plan implementation.

Presentation: Montana water quality standards and application to water bodies with very low nutrient concentrations, Michael Suplee, Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Four major components in considerations of water quality:

- Temperature
- Amount of light
- Rate of flow

- Nutrients in water

Discussion: “Strategies to Promote the Orderly Development of Water”

- Court is relaying on local objectors for orderly development, but in some areas there are no objectors
- All basin closures contain exemptions to storage of water
- Adjudication will help in solving administrative water problems, but does not address the actual use of water
- Rejuvenation of high mountain reservoirs will generate controversy because many are located in Wilderness areas

Proposed Task Force Schedule

June	Task Force meeting/draft newsletter “update”
July-August	No Task Force meeting; staff research/writing
Sept.-Feb. 04	6 Task Force meetings; address three topics (protect water rights, orderly water development & conservation) and issues
March 04	Finalize newsletter with proposed plan recommendations and conduct public outreach (public forums, interest group meetings, etc.)
April-June 04	Task Force meetings Respond to public feedback Finalize recommendations Develop strategy to monitor & evaluate plan implementation
July 04	DNRC convenes the formal public hearings for the state water plan
August	Task Force meeting Finalize report and recommendations Send report to the printer
Sept. 15	Distribute report to the legislature, governor & others

Discussion: Public Review & Comment

- Check in monthly with constituents
- Meet separately with targeted water users
 1. Agriculture & irrigation groups
 2. Municipalities
 3. Montana Water Resources Association
 4. Fishermen & women
 5. Hunters
 6. Conservation groups
 7. Others
- Other outreach techniques

1. Press releases
 2. emails
 3. fact sheets
 4. executive summary
 5. newsletter
 6. radio
- Goals
 1. seek broad-based input & advice
 2. legitimacy
 3. buy-in
 4. better plan

Headline Issues for June Newsletter

- Common values/changing priorities of water use
- Water law basics
- Adjudication (water rights security)
- Future access to water (orderly development)
- Water use efficiency (conservation)

Next Meeting

1. Reformulate the “options for conserving water” document and review
2. Draft for the June newsletter at the next meeting, TF will make comments
3. Holly Franz’ presentation – PPL water rights at next meeting
4. Review conservation options
5. Briefing of Milltown water rights—Gerald Mueller and others
6. Jefferson Emergency Drought Plan presentation
7. Task Force process evaluation

The next meeting will be held on **June 9** at the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Headquarters at 3201 Spurgin Road in Missoula, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. A meeting agenda will be sent prior to the meeting.